

ER 7-6194

Handwritten: STATINTL Personal

Hear Admiral Richard E. Byrd

card

[Redacted Box]

CONFIDENTIAL

NOV 20 1955

Dear Admiral Byrd:

I would like to add my own congratulations to the many, I am sure, you have received on your selection by The President to be in charge of all Antarctic activities. The approaching climax of Antarctic efforts during the International Geophysical Year focuses the world's attention upon this vital segment of the globe.

Your selection is, I am sure, in recognition of your world-wide leadership in the field of Antarctic exploration.

Faithfully,

Allen W. Dulles
Director

STATINTL O/DCI [Redacted Box] (15 Nov 55)

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Distribution

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Handwritten: P.S. I am particularly alerted to the intelligence importance of your mission and hope to keep in close touch with your work.

AWD

CONFIDENTIAL

Handwritten: R. E. Byrd

ambassador

Directive Puts Byrd in Charge Of All U. S. Antarctic Activities

**Orders Issued as Operation
Begins—Permanent Base
Is Believed to Be Aim**

Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, Nov. 2—Rear Admiral Richard E. Byrd, retired, was placed in charge of all Antarctic activities of the United States today.

The appointment, made by direction of President Eisenhower, was announced in a directive by Reuben B. Robertson Jr., acting Secretary of Defense. Navy spokesmen said the directive, in the form of a letter to Admiral Byrd, would eventually place the United States on the same footing as Chile, Argentina, Britain and Australia, the countries that maintain permanent bases on the Antarctic continent.

The proposed program was viewed as a belated triumph for officials in the Government who felt the United States was neglecting an area that has a great strategic potential and natural resources.

The directive outlined the following program:

Admiral Byrd will be the



Rear Admiral R. E. Byrd

senior United States representative "charged with maintaining effective monitoring over those political, scientific, legislative, and operational activities which

comprise the total United States Antarctic program."

Admiral Byrd will act as adviser to the Operations Coordinating Board of the National Security Council on the preparation and execution of Antarctic policy. The board has the responsibility of making sure that Presidential directives are properly carried out.

Admiral Byrd will assist the Secretary of Defense and other officials in the development of legislation related to Antarctic activities.

A "permanent unit for Antarctic activity" will be established, with Admiral Byrd coordinating the activities of all participating governmental departments.

Projected Goal

Official spokesmen said the intention behind this program was the establishment of United States bases somewhere in the 3,000,000 square-mile continent.

The form of the permanent unit for Antarctic activity will not be decided until Admiral Byrd makes recommendations. A quasi-official agency may be established so as to obtain the participation of non-government institutions interested in Antarctic affairs.

A veteran of two North Polar expeditions and four in the Antarctic, Admiral Byrd is expected to depart in the week of Nov. 20 to assume supervision of the expedition, which is already under way. He is expected to make Murdo Sound area on the western side of the Ross Sea.

The first phase of a four-year expedition got under way Sunday with the departure of the icebreaker Edisto from Boston. Today the lead icebreaker, the Glacier, one of the most powerful in the world, sailed from Norfolk.

Message to the Icebreaker

The Glacier is a new Navy craft of about 9,000 tons. Her skipper, Comdr. Eugene H. Naher, received a message from Admiral Byrd saying:

"You are setting off as the vanguard of an historic expedition. Of the five Antarctic expeditions it has been my privilege to lead, the four previous ones had their special significance as pioneering exploratory and scientific endeavors. The national project in which you are participating, on the other hand, will stand out as the first United States Antarctic enterprise to be conceived as part of an international scientific program and as the first one to be projected over a period of at least three or four years."

Rear Admiral George J. Dufek, an Antarctic veteran, is in direct command of the expeditionary task force of 1,800 men, three icebreakers, one tanker, two auxiliary tankers and three cargo vessels. Its work bears the general designation of Operation Deepfreeze.

In the first phase, the task force will prepare bases and supply facilities to be used by the United States in its contribution in the International Geophysical year, 1957-58, a project in which about forty nations will conduct world-wide studies in meteorology, glaciology, ionospheric physics, geomagnetism, cosmic rays and gravity measurements.

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NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☒

☐ DECLASSIFIED

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